

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

October 18, 2016

Canine Program – Probation Department

The Probation Department (hereinafter “Department”) provides supervision to 10,600 juveniles and approximately 45,000 adults in our communities (including 10,000 post-supervised persons (PSP’s) under AB 109). The Department also operates three (3) juvenile halls and over a dozen camps at nine (9) different sites with a combined total population of approximately 1,600 youth.

Among the many responsibilities of the Department is to ensure that our youth in the camps and halls are safe and drug-free and that probationers in the community are complying with their terms and conditions of probation.

To enhance the Department’s efforts towards a safe and drug-free environment in the camps and halls, the Department has had a contract for canine contraband detection services for over seven (7) years. On average, the contractor provides pre-scheduled visits 24 times a month and 288 times a year for approximately \$100,000.

The Department’s D.I.S.A.R.M. (Developing Increased Safety Through Arms Reduction Management) teams conduct compliance checks of high-risk probationers. On any given day, D.I.S.A.R.M. teams conduct dozens of compliance checks, meticulously searching for weapons, narcotics and/or electronic devices while also considering the safety of all those involved. Since inception of the program in February 2000, the D.I.S.A.R.M. teams have conducted over 228,331 searches seizing drugs valued at nearly \$730 million and nearly 11,000 weapons illegally possessed by probationers. The D.I.S.A.R.M. program protects the public by proactively and effectively removing guns from those who shouldn’t possess guns.

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Conducting some of these high-risk searches can be very challenging and last several hours. Unlike in the camps and halls, the D.I.S.A.R.M. teams do not have the benefit of canines which can enhance the Department's search efforts towards an efficient, effective and safe operation for all involved. The use of canines for detection of weapons and narcotics can reduce elevated safety concerns when extended periods of search time are necessary, allow staff to focus on areas of concern and allow residents to resume their normal daily activities sooner and with less disruption. Having personally participated in D.I.S.A.R.M. search operations, I witnessed, first-hand, the challenges faced by these brave deputy probation officers who desperately need detection canine assistance.

Clearly, the Department's access to detection canines should include D.I.S.A.R.M. Whether the detection canine program can be performed more effectively and economically in-house instead of contracting should be analyzed and considered.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Officer to work with the Interim Chief Probation Chief and report back in two weeks with the following:

1. Options on ways the County can expeditiously expand the use of detection canines (currently limited to the camps and halls) to include the D.I.S.A.R.M. teams;
2. Analysis and recommendations on the current use of contracted services versus bringing the program in-house;
3. The associated costs (both start-up and on-going) for the program; and,
4. The feasibility of amending the current contract or entering into a new contract for field compliance searches by the D.I.S.A.R.M. teams either long-term or until the program can be implemented in-house.

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